

State of the Union addresses by their very nature are political speeches. So it was no surprise when President Obama took full advantage of the prime time pulpit he was given last week to deliver an hour and 20 minute sales pitch to a national audience of 37 million viewers.

From my seat in the House Chamber, the president seemed to present two speeches. He opened and closed his remarks with appropriate references to the bravery and laudable accomplishments of our military. Sandwiched in the middle, he served a heaping helping of warmed up political leftovers from his previous stump speeches.

Talking about his jobs record, the president gave the impression that the recession is already in the rearview mirror. "In the last 22 months, businesses have created more than three million jobs. Last year they created the most jobs since 2005. American manufacturers are hiring again, creating jobs for the first time since the late 1990's."

While we all want to be optimistic, the president's account failed to mention that nearly two million Americans have lost their jobs since he was sworn into office, or that the nation is enduring the longest period of continued high unemployment since the Great Depression (over eight percent for 35 months). Our nation's gross domestic product continues to lag well behind the 3-percent-plus rate that most economists say will need to be sustained to pull the current 8.5 percent jobless rate back down to a more acceptable level, and the president's failed stimulus plan and his massive over-spending have exploded our debt and done little to help in the country's economic recovery.

Mr. Obama's pledge to implement an "all-out, all-of-the-above" energy strategy was frankly confusing, given his administration's contrary track record. Along the Gulf Coast, we've directly felt the impact of the president's slow approval of new drilling permits, with tens of thousands of jobs lost. The president also recently denied a permit to construct the Keystone XL Pipeline from Canada to the U.S., a project with bipartisan support that would have created 20,000 new construction jobs in the American heartland and supply oil to our refineries from a friendly and consistent ally.

The president's call for expanded tax relief for small businesses is also perplexing. For many business owners, Mr. Obama's tenure has been characterized by a seemingly constant threat of tax increases and costly regulations. If he were truly serious and consistent about lifting these

burdens from small businesses, he might find a receptive audience among America's jobs providers and the House of Representatives.

Giving speeches designed to hit popular topics with the American people is one thing, but actually showing the will to work with Congress to promote job creation, expand American energy production and make the complex tax code simpler is quite another.

The president has spent the last several months touring the nation pointing his finger at Congress – and specifically the House – for not doing anything. What he really means is the House will not rubber stamp his agenda of higher taxes and unchecked borrowing. As of last week, the House has passed 28 separate bills specifically addressing job creation – ranging from opening domestic oil drilling to removing expensive and cumbersome regulations on small businesses. Every one of these bills has been stopped at the Democrat-led Senate's doorstep. In his address, President Obama promised to combat obstruction. He can make good on that promise by helping to lift the Senate's jobs bill blockade.

### **Congress Should Do its Job or Not Get Paid:**

Each spring, it is the primary duty of both houses of Congress to write and pass a new federal budget. The House passed an FY2012 budget last April and we will soon begin work on an FY2013 budget. In contrast, the Senate hasn't passed a budget of its own in nearly three years! In fact, last Tuesday marked 1,000 days since the Senate has actually passed an annual federal budget blueprint. This is more than just willful obstructionism on the Senate's part, it is dereliction of duty.

Americans demand that their representatives and Senators do their jobs. When most Americans fail to work, they don't get a paycheck. I believe the same principle should be applied to Congress. For this reason, I am an original cosponsor of the Do Your Job Act (HR 3799), which denies the salaries and operating expenses of both the House and Senate if a budget resolution is not passed by May 15th, each year.

The House continues to lead by example, and I call on Senate Majority Leader Reid to do his job and pass a budget resolution. While he's at it, he can also lift the Senate blockade of the 28 House-passed jobs bills.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.

For release: January 30, 2012